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Marble, Thomas Littlefield

Giuseppina.

A play in one act.





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GIUSEPPINA

BY

THOMAS LITTLEFIELD MARBLE

An illustration of two figures, a man on the left and a woman on the right, holding a large banner. The man is wearing a long, flowing robe with a cross on his chest and a sword at his waist. The woman is wearing a long, flowing robe with a floral headband. They are standing in front of a background of trees and foliage. The banner they are holding contains the text "SERGEL'S ACTING DRAMA".

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No. 596

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GIUSEPPINA

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

BY
THOMAS LITTLEFIELD MARBLE

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CHICAGO AND NEW YORK
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

CHARACTERS.

ROBERT SHERWOOD, a reporter.

KATE PENNINGTON, his fiancée.

MONSIEUR LOUIS, proprietor of the Café Italy.

PIETRO, a waiter.

GIUSEPPINA, an Italian peasant girl.

PLACE.—Private dining-room of an Italian restaurant in New York City.

TIME.—The Present.

COSTUMES.

SHERWOOD.—Evening clothes; top-coat and opera hat.

KATE.—Elaborate evening gown.

LOUIS.—Neat business suit.

PIETRO.—Waiter's livery.

GIUSEPPINA.—Red and white striped skirt; scarlet kerchief knotted over head; large brass ear-rings.

For the benefit of amateurs who cannot secure an orchestra, it may be said that an excellent musical effect may be obtained by the use of a large phonograph supplied with orchestral records. The first selection should be a spirited waltz; the others of a more sombre character. The phonograph should be placed in a room adjacent to the stage, and the door of the room opened and closed as the characters enter and exeunt.

The following key to the pronunciation of certain Italian words used in the play may be of assistance.

| | | | |
|------------|---------------|-----------|----------------|
| carissima | =cä-ris'-ē-mä | mio | =mē'-ō |
| ecco | =ec-co | Pietro | =Pē-ä'-trō |
| Giuseppina | =Jū-se-pē'-nä | signore | =sē-nyō'-re |
| grazia | =grät'-zē-ä | signorina | =sē-nyō-rē'-nä |

GIUSEPPINA.

SCENE.—*Private dining-room of an Italian restaurant. Door, R. U. E., opening into hallway. Electric bell at side of door. Hat rack, C., back. Window, R. C., back, overlooking the city. Small dining-table, R. C., front, with serving table near window. Chairs at right and left of dining-table. A second dining-table, at the extreme L., is concealed from the view of those on stage by a thick row of potted palms. Chair at table. Candelabra, flowers, etc., on tables. The walls are frescoed with brilliant scenes typical of Italian life, and there is a general atmosphere of festivity.*

(At rise of curtain, the door, R. U. E., opens, and the strains of an orchestra, the clatter of dishes and the hum of conversation are heard outside. This continues till door is closed, when the music is heard less distinctly. Enter MONSIEUR LOUIS and KATE PENNINGTON through door. KATE wears an elaborate gown, opera cloak, etc.)

LOUIS (*graciously*). Zees vay, Mees Pennington. Mee-staire Sherwood he telephone me to haf' ze palm room ready, and to fetch you here when you haf' arrive. (*Closes door, and assists KATE to remove cloak*)

KATE. The palm room? What does Rob mean, I wonder? We're not usually so exclusive. I prefer the main dining-hall with the people and the music and all that sort of thing. It's half the fun of dining here.

LOUIS. Oui. Zat ees jus' vhat I say vhen I—er—vhat you call heem?—design ze Café Italy. Ze people zay vant color and spice and ze noveltee. Zay are seek of ze French restaurant. Zay vant a change: zay vish to eat ze macaroni. So I hire ze Dagoes for ze vaitaires, but I keep ze French cook, and—voila! Eet ees ze Café Italy!

KATE (*smiling*). Yes; and we couldn't get along without it now. Why, you don't know how Rob and I enjoy our weekly dinner here. It is so cozy and restful after the week's work is over. We always go to the theatre afterward, and if Rob is too busy to call for me, I venture in town alone and wait for him just as I am doing to-night.

(*Sound outside, as if made by the rising of an elevator, followed by the sliding of a metal door.*)

LOUIS. I do not think zat you vill haf' to vait long. Zat ees ze elevataire now. (*Goes to door, R. U. E., opens same, and looks off R. Sound of music, etc., as before*) Oui, and here ees Meestaire Sherwood himself. (*Starts*) Parbleu!

(*Enter ROBERT SHERWOOD and GIUSEPPINA, R. U. E. The former wears evening clothes, light top-coat, and opera hat. The latter is dressed in a brilliantly colored costume of cheap material; she has a scarlet kerchief knotted over her head, and wears large ear-rings.*)

SHERWOOD (*quietly*). Keep cool, Louis. I'll explain later. I want to hide this young lady behind the palms there for a little while. By-and-by you may get her something to eat—something to make her think of home—spaghetti, you know, or——

GIUSEPPINA (*smiling sweetly*). Spa-ghet-ti! Ah, grazia, signore.

SHERWOOD (*good-humoredly*). Well, yes; but not just now. Come. (*Leads her to table behind palms*) Yes. Right over here. Now sit down. (*She sits at table*) Be comfortable. That's right. (*Places fingers to his lips*) Sh! Not a word, remember. (*Turns to LOUIS*) She doesn't speak English, but I think she understands. Now, Louis, if you can spare Pietro, I'd like a heart to heart talk with him.

LOUIS. Ver' well, sir. I vill send heem up. Ring if you vant me. (*Bows low*) Au revoir. (*Exit, R. U. E.*)

(SHERWOOD *removes top-coat, hanging hat and coat on rack near door. He then takes seat at table opposite KATE.*)

KATE (*playfully*). Well, Mr. Assurance, what have you to say for yourself?

SHERWOOD. A great deal, Miss Astonishment; but I'm afraid there 's not time for explanation now. Pietro will be here directly. (*Rises and looks in direction of GIUSEPPINA*) The palms conceal the little lady quite effectually, I think. Pietro will not notice her. (*Musingly*) He has treated her abominably. I—(*Enter PIETRO, R. U. E.*) Ah, Pietro, good evening.

GIUSEPPINA (*in a low whisper*). Pietro!

PIETRO (*effusively*). Goota eve', signore and signorina. Shall I serva da deener?

SHERWOOD. No, not just now. We're waiting for a vacant table in the other room. You may bring us a little of the red wine, if you please, and then wait over there by the window. I'm expecting a message, and may need you.

PIETRO. Vera goot, signore. (*Exit, door, R. U. E.*)

SHERWOOD (*returning to seat at table*). Now, Kate, please be very interested in the story I'm going to tell, and do not mind if Pietro is unduly excited. I intend he shall be.

KATE (*mockingly*). Gramercy, sir! How very mysterious!

(*Enter PIETRO, door, R. U. E. He carries glasses and bottle or decanter of wine; places glasses on table and fills them.*)

PIETRO. Beholda da wine, signore. Eet ees red like-a da leeps of da signorina; eet ees mild like-a da spreenga time in Eetalee.

KATE (*laughingly*). Ha, ha, ha! You are a poet, Pietro.

PIETRO. Grazia, signorina. Eet ees more poeteek behinda da palm'. Shall I move-a da table?

SHERWOOD (*interrupting him*). No, no. Just wait there by the window, please. I'll call if we need you again.

PIETRO. Si, signore,

(PIETRO retires to window. *Pause.* SHERWOOD *finger wine glass idly, then turns to KATE and speaks abruptly.*)

SHERWOOD. I was over at the docks this afternoon on board a European liner. We often pick up a good story among the immigrants, you know.

KATE (*with enthusiasm*). Yes, I know. It's very interesting, isn't it? I always think of those ocean liners as miniature worlds. From cabin to steerage! The history of humanity is there.

SHERWOOD. Yes; and I never realized it more forcibly than to-day. I took an interpreter along, for the steerage was filled with foreigners, and I wanted to speak with them. I found a squalid, commonplace lot of beggars, though, and was about to return in disgust, when there in the lowest stratum of the ship's little world, I stumbled upon a better story than I had hoped to find. True, its motif is old—old as man's egoism and woman's love; but it's tinged with pathos, and rich in local color. It concerns a little Italian peasant girl. (*Glances at PIETRO from the corner of his eye*) Her name is Giuseppina.

PIETRO (*giving an astonished start*). Giuseppina!

SHERWOOD (*turning toward window*). Did you speak, Pietro?

PIETRO. Ah, sì, signore. I begga da pardona. I t'inka out louda. Excoosa me, signore and signorina.

SHERWOOD. Oh, that's all right. (*Turns to KATE*) She was a very pretty girl, about eighteen, I fancy. Her hair and eyes were very dark, and her cheeks were red,—a deep, deep red like the tint of a Jacqueminot rose, and she wore the picturesque costume of her country. She seemed utterly bewildered when I found her, for the great, whole-souled America of her dreams had proved quite indifferent to her arrival.

KATE (*sympathetically*). Poor little girl!

SHERWOOD. Yes, so I thought, and I asked the interpreter to talk with her. She laughed delightedly to hear her language spoken in a foreign land, and her eyes grew eloquent as she prattled on. She had come to America to seek her lover. It was all so very simple: a tale of abiding

faith and childlike innocence. It seemed a sacrilege to undeceive her. And yet a single glimpse of the city taught her more of life's unfathomable mystery than had all the years of her life at home.

KATE. Was she so unsophisticated then?

SHERWOOD. Yes, she had no conception of the bigness of the world. Two years ago she was betrothed to a lad of her own station in Italy. He was an ambitious, enthusiastic fellow, a bit discontented with the opportunities at home, I dare say, and he determined to emigrate to America. (*Turns to PIETRO*) By the way, his name was like yours, Pietro.

PIETRO (*with agitation*). Like mine, signore?

SHERWOOD. Yes; and he resembled you in many ways. (*Turns to KATE*) Well, time went on. Pietro sailed for the land that knows neither peasant nor king, and Giuseppina stayed at home.

KATE. The women always do.

SHERWOOD. No, not always. Giuseppina didn't—long. At first Pietro wrote her the most wonderful letters. America was beautiful, lavish, golden, and there was work enough for all. Pietro did not choose to join the innumerable brotherhood of shovel and pick. Ah, no! His temperament was too ethereal for that. And so he became a waiter at a little Italian restaurant here in New York. From that time on, his letters to Giuseppina dwindled in size and frequency, and finally they ceased altogether. It was a cruel blow for Giuseppina. The old tabbies who gossip said——

KATE (*with interest*). Ah! They have them in Italy then.

SHERWOOD (*smiling*). Yes, and they said that Pietro had forgotten; that he had found another girl in that far-off, crazy land, and they gave Giuseppina much good advice.

KATE (*grimly*). Of course they did.

SHERWOOD. But Giuseppina did not heed it.

KATE (*dryly*). Naturally not.

SHERWOOD. She believed deep down in her heart that Pietro was true to her, and she thought that only sickness or death could explain his silence.

KATE (*with pity*). Foolish little girl!

SHERWOOD. From morning till night she toiled in the

sweltering fields to earn her passage money to America. Then at last she bade adieu to sunny Italy, and started in quest of her lover. That is the story she told me. She was very artless, very transparent——

KATE (*quickly*). Are you so sure of that? May not your story be richer in local color than you think? The vendetta thrives under sunny skies, you know. Perhaps little Giuseppina is seeking vengeance instead of love. Perhaps she wishes to kill——

SHERWOOD (*quietly, but very distinctly*). Pietro?

(PIETRO *trembles violently*.)

KATE (*with a quick glance at PIETRO*). No; the woman.

(PIETRO *shows relief; turns and stands looking out window*.)

SHERWOOD. You may be right; still I have a feeling that there is no woman. I have a shrewd suspicion that Pietro has grown a bit ashamed of the little peasant girl. It is one of the things that our glorious land—the land of equality—has taught him. I could not tell Giuseppina this, for one who has not seen it cannot understand the height of lordly dignity to which a waiter may rise in this land of ours. But I'm going to find this Pietro if I can (I think I know where to look for him), and I'm going to let Giuseppina hear her fate from his lips. Who knows? It may be that he loves her after all. (*Turns toward PIETRO*) Tell me, Pietro. You should understand the Southern temperament. Has your namesake forgotten the little peasant girl?

(PIETRO *remains a moment looking out window, then turns suddenly, and comes down stage*.)

PIETRO (*with emotion*). Forgotta her? Ah, no, signore. He no forgetta Giuseppina. He only t'ink dat he forgetta. He ees mucha da fool—dis Pietro—and Eetalee ees vera far away. He—he—You say dat Giuseppina ees here?

SHERWOOD (*quietly*). Yes, here in New York.

PIETRO (*tremulously*). And she worka in da field' to earna da mon' to come to heem?

SHERWOOD (*rising*). Yes, she toiled early and late, and

with her little hands. They are very white and very soft little hands, Pietro. Really, she is hardly more than a child.

PIETRO (*tragically*). Ah, signore, I coulda keela myself froma da shame. Have peety, signore, and take me to da leetle peasant girl.

KATE. Why, Pietro, what possible interest can you have in her?

PIETRO (*with agitation*). She—she ees of my country, signorina, and I would like-a to helpa her.

KATE. But why should you wish to kill yourself from shame?

PIETRO (*glibly*). Ah, signorina, dat was whata you call a sleep of da tongue. I meanta dat—(*Breaks down suddenly, and covers his face with his hands*. GIUSEPPINA *appears deeply moved*. Suddenly PIETRO *turns to SHERWOOD, and extends his hands in supplication*) Ah, signore, I am no goota at da lie. I am dat Pietro who leave leetle Giuseppina to worka in da field'. (*Strikes his breast*) Ecco! I am da man.

SHERWOOD (*sternly*). Yes, I know you are. You are the man who forgot. (PIETRO *cowers before him*) It would be a mercy to send Giuseppina back to her native land, and to ask her to pray the blessed Virgin that she too might forget—forget that such a worthless scamp as you had ever crossed her path. It seems a pity that her heart should be in your keeping. She is such a pretty, refined little girl! Heaven fashioned her for better things. (*Pause*) By Jove! I'm going to do it. I'm going to tell her the truth. She will suffer at first, and the great tears will rise in those big black eyes of hers, but she'll get over it after a time, and will find some noble-hearted fellow a thousand times worthier than you who will make her life very happy.

PIETRO (*beseechingly*). Oh, signore, have peety; have peety. I love Giuseppina. Do not send her away. I have been like-a da sailors in my country, signore. I have listen' to da voices dat sing on da rock'. My leetle boat has almos' been wreck', for I have turna my back to da way dat ees safe, and have looka only to da cleef where da sea-green signorinas comba da hair, and sing, and laugh, and tella me;

"Come on; we waita for you." But Giuseppina, she no forgetta. She speaka to me across da sea. She show me da goota way, and I have remember' before eet ees too late. Ah, signore, she ees beautiful like-a da summer night, and I love her. Her heart is tender, and she will forgive. Let me go to her. Da voices on da rock' calla me no more.

(KATE rises, crosses slowly in front of table, and stands before PIETRO. SHERWOOD crosses to L., and stands near the row of palms.)

KATE (*gently*). Pietro, we women are very foolish. We sometimes forgive the men we love even though they have heeded the sirens' call. And so I'm going to plead for you—just for Giuseppina's sake, and because I am a woman. I am going to ask Mr. Sherwood to give you another chance.

(KATE crosses to SHERWOOD, and PIETRO goes up stage to window.)

SHERWOOD. No need of that. The little girl shall decide for herself. (*Goes behind palms*) Giuseppina, you may come out now. (*Gives GIUSEPPINA his hand, and leads her to centre of stage*) Pietro, here she is—the girl you had forgotten. (PIETRO turns) Take her, and mind you treat her kindly.

(PIETRO stands mute with astonishment at the sight of GIUSEPPINA. The latter smiles confidently, and moves a step or two in his direction).

GIUSEPPINA (*softly*). Pietro mio.

PIETRO (*hoarsely*). Giuseppina! Carissima!

(PIETRO rushes forward, and clasps GIUSEPPINA in his arms.

SHERWOOD crosses to door and presses electric button. Business of putting on coat and assisting KATE with cloak until LOUIS enters, door, R. U. E. Door is left open till end of act, and music is heard outside as before. As LOUIS enters, SHERWOOD turns towards him.)

SHERWOOD (*to LOUIS*). Can you not arrange to give

Pietro a holiday? His little sweetheart has come over from Italy. They're going to be married to-morrow.

(PIETRO and GIUSEPPINA remain clasped in each other's arms.

LOUIS stands near door, R. U. E., through which KATE and SHERWOOD exeunt.)

CURTAIN.

A Woman's Honor

A Drama in Four Acts

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

General Mark Lester. A Hero of the Cuban Ten Years' War..Lead
Pedro Mendez. His half brother.....Heavy
Dr. Garcia. Surgeon of the Madaline.....Straight
Gilbert Hall, M. D. In love with Olive.....Juvenile
Robert Glenn. A Wall Street Banker.....Old man
Gregory Grimes. Lester's Private Secretary.....Eccentric Comedy
Ebenezer. Glenn's Butler.....Negro Comedy
Olive { Glenn's }Juvenile lead
Sally { Daughters }Soubrette
Maria. Wife of Pedro.....Character

NOTE.—Glenn and Garcia may double.

Act 1. The Glenn Mansion, New York City.

Act 2. The Isle of Santa Cruz, off San Domingo. One month later.

Acts 3 and 4. Lester's home at Santa Cruz. Five months later. Between Acts 3 and 4 one day elapses.

SYNOPSIS OF INCIDENTS

Act 1. Handsome drawingroom at Glenn's. Sally and Ebenezer. "I isn't imputtinent, no, no, Missy." "Papa can't bear Gregory Grimes, but I'm going to marry him, if I feel like it." "Going away?" "I was dizzy for a moment, that was all." "This marriage is absolutely necessary to prevent my disgrace." "General Lester, you are a noble man and I will repay my father's debt of honor." "Robert Glenn is dead."

Act 2. Isle of Santa Cruz. "Mark brings his American bride to his home today." "You and I and our child will be no better than servants." "How can I help but be happy with one so good and kind?" "It means that I am another man's wife." "Dat's mine; don't you go to readin' my lub lettahs in public."

Act 3. Sitting-room in Lester's house. "What has happened?" "Is my husband safe?" "Break away, give your little brother a chance." "To tell the truth, my heart is breaking." "Debt of duty! and I was fool enough to think she loved me."

Act 4. "The illness of the general has an ugly look." "The gossips have it she would rejoice to be rid of her husband." "The Gilbert Hall I loved is dead." "Standing on the brink of the grave, my vision is clearer." "Forgive, and I will devote my life to making you happy in order to repay the debt I owe you—a debt of honor."

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SYNOPSIS OF INCIDENTS

ACT I—Hick'ry Farm House

Darkwood's Plot—Skinner tempted—Money! Gold!—Zekiel appears—"Be you Ann Maria's boy?"—Fortune's reminiscences—The deed must be stolen!—Hard cider—Aunt Priscilla's love—The alderman's brogue—"Dear departed Hezekiah"—Jessie's secret—"Then you still love me?"—"Larry McKeegan's courtin'"—The "widdy" succumbs—"Zekiel's fav'rit' song"—McKeegan's ghost—Jack Nelson makes a discovery—Jessie has gone!"—"Heaven help me!"—Zekiel's prayer.

ACT II—In Fortune's Shanty

Zekiel's misfortunes—The rent collector—Darkwood's insult—"Villain, you lie!"—Skinner's remorse—The New York detective—The bank robbery—Darkwood threatens—Jessie returns—The alderman married—"Sure it's a darlint little woife she is"—Zekiel's happiness—"Gosh! I ain't felt so gol-darned happy sinct I wuz a boy"—A trap for Darkwood—Jack and Jessie reunited—Priscilla pacified—Darkwood at bay—"Stand aside, as you value your lives!"—The detective fires—"You've done for me this time!"—Zekiel's forgiveness—Old Hick'ry farm restored.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

Imogene Courtleigh. Wilful, wayward and wealthy.... Juvenile lead
Ginger. A Gypsy waif.....Soubrette
Nance Tyson. Her supposed mother.....Character
Prudence Freeheart. A poor relation.....Old maid comedy
Horace Verner. An artist and accidentally a married man.....
.....Juvenile lead
Dick Potts. His chum and incidentally in love with Ginger.....
.....Eccentric comedy
Ira Courtleigh. Imogene's guardian.....Heavy
Buck Tyson. A Gypsy tinker.....Character comedy
Elmer Van Sittert. Anglomaniac, New Yorker.....Dude comedy
Major Duffy. County Clerk and Confederate veteran.....
.....Irish comedy
Squire Ripley. A Virginia landlord.....Character old man
Lige. A gentleman of color.....Negro character
Note: Squire Ripley and Van Sittert may double.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Act 1. "The George Washington," a country tavern in old Virginia. An impromptu wedding. "When I was on the boards at old Pott's theayter." "Horace has fallen in love and has done nothing but rave about her ever since." "The marriage ceremony performed, I depart, and you will make no attempt ever to see me again." "Except at your own request, never!"

Act 2. Lovers' Leap, a Blue Mountain precipice. A daring rescue. "Gold does not always purchase happiness, lady." "Do you ever feel the need of a faithful friend?" "I do, I do, I'm thinking of buying a bulldog." "Look at the stride of him, and Imogene sitting him as if he were a part of herself." Within twenty feet of certain death. "Gone? Without even my thanks for such a deed of desperate heroism?"

Act. 3. The Courtleigh Place. A woman's folly. "And you say his father was a gentleman?" "I have already refused to sign the document." "Stand back, she is my wife."

Act. 4. The "Mountain Studio." "You're too good to let that French girl get you." "I struck him full in the face and the challenge followed." "You will not meet this man, dear love?" "It shall, at least, be blow for blow." "I'll release you from your promise. Fight that man." "I'm the happiest man in old Virginia, because you love me."

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Carl Faber..... | An ex-convict |
| Howard Ross..... | A manufacturer |
| Dennis Hogan..... | Servant to Ross |
| Abel | Gardener to Ross |
| Judge Havens..... | Of the police court |
| Recorder | Of the police court |
| Lettner | Clerk of police court |
| Second Court Clerk..... | Clerk of police court |
| Two policemen | |
| Little Hugo..... | Agatha's child |
| Agatha Steme | Ross' bookkeeper |
| Ida Rheinhold..... | A retired singer |
| Mrs. Wilmuth..... | A washerwoman |
| Katie | Factory girl |
| Frances | Factory girl |

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Act 1. Ross' private office. "What has given me the honor of this visit?" "I will never sing again. My life has been a sad failure." "Good God! My mother!" "I have done wrong, I confess, but when a mother asks, a child must forgive. Oh, Mr. Ross, help me." "You, my rich and famous mother, to you I was nothing, and you—you are nothing—nothing to me." "Agatha! Agatha! My child! My child!"

Act 2. Agatha's attic. "My poor father. So young and strong. How I could have loved him." "Yes, Katie is right, I have nothing but bread for my sweet child." "Madam, I would lie if I say she was anything but a lady." "On the other side, towards the garden, there are a few rooms I have never used. If you will take them—" "You do not look like a man who could commit murder. How was it?" "I was a weak man and many misfortunes made me desperate." "My picture! I must be mad." "You are good, child, but you shall not call me father." "Father! Father!"

Act 3. Ross' Garden. "He is so good to me, but I cannot forget my poor unhappy father." "The picture was taken when I was young. He shall have it." "Stay here and be my wife." "That suspicious old man is in the garden." "For her I sacrificed everything." "Do you want to go to prison again?" "My father needs me to defend and comfort him."

Act 4. A Police Court. "Do not ask me, your honor—I am an ex-convict." "Your silence will not help you." "It was dark and Mrs. Steme was that scared she was faint." "I hope, sir, yer honor believes in a future life, sor." "He wished to see his child; I am his child." "Grandfather, we love you." "I am his wife. Do not condemn him."

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